

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 IO-06 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-06 AID-01
/039 W

-----025431 170134Z /73

P R 162340Z JAN 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0019
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
SECDEL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JERUSALEM 0119

PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (CODEL ZABLOCKI), OVIP)
SUBJ: CODEL ZABLOCKI: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN
JANUARY 15

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CODEL ZABLOCKI ON JAN 15 CAME AWAY
FROM A MORE THAN TWO-HOUR ENCOUNTER WITH A
DEFENSIVE, TIRED, AND UNCOMPROMISING BEGIN WITH
THEIR HOPES FOR PEACE, RAISED BY TALKS WITH LEADERS
AT ALL OTHER STOPS EXCEPT SYRIA, CONSIDERABLY AND
ABRUPTLY DIMINISHED. BEGIN WAS ADAMANT ON KEEPING
JEWISH SETTLEMENTS IN NORTHERN SINAI WITH AN
ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE FOR PROTECTION, ON A WEST
BANK SOLUTION WHICH ALLOWS THE IDF TO REMAIN
INDEFINITELY AND ON THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF ANY
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FORMULA WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO AN INDEPENDENT WEST
BANK. BEGIN SHOWED ACUTE SENSITIVITY TO RECENT
REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT SADAT WHICH BEGIN
CONSIDERED RETREATS FROM AGREEMENTS WHICH THEY HAD
REACHED PRIVATELY AT ISMAILIA (SUCH AS A
GIDI-MITLA REDLINE FOR EGYPTIAN FORCES IN SINAI).
HE SAID THAT ISRAEL HAD BEEN RESPONSIVE TO

SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE AND HAD, BY ITS PEACE PLAN AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEES, MAINTAINED THE MOMENTUM OF THE TALKS. IN RESPONSE TO CODEL SUGGESTIONS THAT TIME MIGHT BE SHORT TO REACH A PEACE SETTLEMENT, BEGIN SAID THAT THE PEACE PROCESS MIGHT TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME TO SUCCEED. END SUMMARY.

2. BEGIN STARTED THE MEETING WITH SOME BRIEF AMENITIES AND LAUNCHED QUICKLY INTO HIS PATENTED MAP BRIEFING. HE WAS ESPECIALLY EMPHATIC IN OPPOSING A PALESTINIAN STATE AND SELF-DETERMINATION ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA WHICH HE SAID WOULD BE SYNONYMOUS WITH AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. HE SAW SELF-DETERMINATION AS LEADING INEVITABLY TO SUCH A STATE, JEOPARDIZING ISRAELI SECURITY AND BRINGING "ARAFATIANS" AND RUSSIAN COMMUNIST INFLUENCE WITHIN EASY ARTILLERY RANGE OF ISRAEL'S COASTAL CITIES. ON THE SINAI, BEGIN WAS ADAMANT IN OPPOSING THE LATEST EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL FOR A DEMILITARIZED ZONE CLOSE TO ISRAEL'S BORDER AND WITHDRAWAL OF SINAI SETTLEMENTS. HE DEFENDED RAFIAH SETTLEMENTS AS ESSENTIAL TO ISRAELI SECURITY BECAUSE THEY PREVENT A LINK BETWEEN THE EGYPTIAN AND GAZA AREAS, WHICH WOULD BE "A MORTAL DANGER TO ISRAEL".

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3. BEGIN ALLUDED TO AN ALLEGED RECENT SADAT STATEMENT THAT THESE SETTLEMENTS "SHOULD BE BURNED", AND, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING SADAT'S DENIAL, COMPLAINED THAT THE DENIAL HAD TAKEN TOO LONG. HE ATTRIBUTED WHAT HE CONSIDERED A HARDENING OF SADAT'S ATTITUDE ON SEVERAL ISSUES SINCE ISMAILIA TO EGYPTIAN ADVISERS WHO HAVE "REGULAR" MINDS. HE REMINDED HIS LISTENERS THAT HE HAD TOLD SADAT THAT ISRAEL WOULD KEEP THE SETTLEMENTS AND WOULD NOT ALLOW THEM TO BE LEFT UNPROTECTED BY ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES. LATER, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, BEGIN ALLUDED TO THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES OVER THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS; "WE WILL NOT REMOVE THOSE SETTLEMENTS; IF I REMOVE THEM, I WILL BE OVERTHROWN IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS. BUT I WON'T WAIT FOR THAT. I'LL RESIGN."

4. IN RESPONSE TO REFERENCES TO SADAT'S STATEMENTS THAT HE HAD GIVEN BEGIN PEACE AND RECOGNITION BUT HAD RECEIVED NOTHING IN RETURN, BEGIN SEEMED HURT AND AT VARIOUS TIMES DURING THE BRIEFING EMPHASIZED THE CONCESSIONS HE HAD OFFERED:
(A) "DESPITE OUR CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER JUDEA AND

SAMARIA, WE PROPOSE FULL AUTONOMY OR SELF-RULE AND AN
END OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT (ARABS AND PALESTINIANS WILL
GET AUTONOMY AND JEWISH PALESTINIANS SECURITY)"; (B) EGYPTIAN
SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE SINAI; (C) DROPPING ALL PREVIOUS
GOVERNMENTS' DETERMINATION TO KEEP THE WESTERN COAST
OF THE GULF OF EILAT; (D) ISRAELI OR JORDANIAN
CITIZENSHIP FOR WEST BANK AND PALESTINIANS; (E) NO NEW
SETTLEMENTS IN THE SINAI ("ONLY ENLARGED ARABLE LAND AND
MORE PEOPLE FOR THOSE SETTLEMENTS"); (F) DROPPING
"OUR RIGHT" TO ASK FOR CHANGES IN OUR INTERNATIONAL
BORDERS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 JERUSALEM 0119

5. IN THE COURSE OF THE BRIEFING, BEGIN RAN
THROUGH A NUMBER OF FAMILIAR STATEMENTS:
-- "SELF-DETERMINATION CONCERNS PEOPLES, NOT
FRACTIONS OF PEOPLES AND ARAB SELF-DETERMINATION
CAN OCCUR IN THE 21 ARAB STATES HOLDING NEARLY
100 MILLION PEOPLE";

-- EVEN IF WE REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT,
THE OTHER STATES AROUND US ARE IMPLACABLE FOES;

-- WE DO NOT WANT TO BE "PROTECTED JEWS",

DEFENDED BY FOREIGNERS, "CHANGING THE MORAL FIBRE OF OUR STATE." IN RESPONSE TO SUGGESTION OF UN TROOPS ON THE WEST BANK, A UN PRESENCE IN SINAI IS POSSIBLE SOLUTION THERE;

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-- ISRAELI OPPOSITION TO THE PLO IS IN EGYPT'S INTEREST ("WHEN I TOLD SADAT, SOME OF THEM ARE COMMUNITIS, HE REPLIED, "NOT SOME OF THEM, ALL OF THEM");

-- RECENT HISTORICAL PRECEDENT DOES NOT FAVOR RETURNING REFUGEES TO THEIR FORMER LANDS (CITING GERMANY AND EASTER EUROPE); RATHER, IN RECENT YEARS, THEY HAVE BEEN RESETTLED WHERE THEY FLED; ARABS MUST AKE RESPONSIBILTY FOR MOST ARAB REFUGEES.

6. BEGIN RETURNED SEVERAL TIMES WITH SADNESS TO DESCRIBE THE SINAI DEMILITARIZED ZONE PROPOSAL SADAT MADE TO HIM. ACCORDING TO BEGIN, SADAT HAD AGREED TO DEMILITARIZE MOST OF THE SINAI; BUT NOW GENERAL GAMASY PROPOSES TO MAKE THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE MUCH SMALLER AND FAR TO THE EAST, MUCH CLOSER TO ISRAEL'S BORDERS; "HE HAS FORGOTTEN THE PROMISE SADAT GAVE ME" AND " RPO-POSES TO PLACE EGYPTIAN SOLDIERS THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE SINAI. WE SHALL NOT ACCEPT THIS; THE DESERT MUST BE DEMILITARIZED".

7. WHEN THE CODEL CHALLENGED THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE ISRAELI POSITION ON A DEMILITARIZED WEST BANK, HE WAS ADAMANT THAT THE ISRAELI ARMY MUST PROTECT THE DEMILITARIZED AREA; "DEMILITARIZATION MEANS THE ISRAELI ARMY KEEPS IT DEMILITARIZED". AND THEN SENSING SKEPTICISM, HE RESPONDED WITH CONSIDERABLE HEAT..."IT IS OUR LIFE, OUR SURVIVAL, FOR GOD'S SAKE*" TO US, HE REITERATED, PEACE MEANS SECURITY.

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8. WHEN THE CODEL SUGGESTED THAT PEACE MUST BE ACHIEVED QUICKLY OR THE OPPORTUNITY CREATED BY SADAT'S INITIATIVE WOULD FADE, BEGIN TOLD THE

DELEGATION "NO ONE SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED; WE WILL DISCUSS ALL PROBLEMS; THE ROAD WE ARE EMBARKING ON IS IRREVERSIBLE; THERE MAY BE UPS AND DOWNS, AND IT MAY TAKE SOME TIME (NOBODY SHOULD PUSH US TO HAVE A TREATY SIGNED IN 24 HOURS*); BUT ULTIMATELY THERE WILL BE PEACE. THERE ARE NO LAST CHANCES, THE PM SAID, "HAVE PATIENCE, WE WILL DO OUR BEST".

9. COMMENT: THIS WAS A TOUGH, FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WHICH ENDED WITH MUCH AGREEMENT TO DISAGREE. BEGIN SEEMED TIRED; HE TALKED IN SOMEWHAT PETULENT, INJURED TONES. HE SAW CLEARLY FROM THE QUESTIONS THAT THE DELEGATION HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH THE POSITIONS AND DESIRE FOR PEACE IN THE ARAB STATES THEY HAD VISITED. WHILE THE PM'S ARGUMENTS WERE LARGELY FAMILIAR, HIS FORMULATIONS WERE PARTICULARLY INFLEXIBLE, ESPECIALLY REGARDING THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS. BEGIN POSED GENEROUSLY FOR PICTURES AFTER THE MEETING AND CHATTED BRIEFLY AND IN A FRIENDLY MANNER WITH MANY DELEGATION MEMBERS. BUT FOR THE MEMBERS, IT WAS A DISHEARTENING EXPERIENCE, ONE WHICH LEFT THEM DEEPLY CONCERNED FOR THE FATE OF THE POLITICAL TALKS ABOUT TO OPEN IN JERUSALEM.

10. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN CLEARED BY THE CODEL.
NEWLIN

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Message Attributes

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